



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

ROGER BERLINER
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 1

May 2, 2011

Kathy Stevens, Chair
Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board
1 Veterans Place
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Stevens and Members of the Board:

Thank you for your recent letter to Council President Ervin regarding the Fiscal Year 2012 Operating Budget. I found your concerns to be well thought-out and candid, and many of them are views that I share. I am grateful that you took the time to articulate your concerns so that my colleagues and I will have the benefit of your input as we consider this challenging budget, which as you know contains only the most difficult choices and the most painful decisions.

Like the Board, I am also very concerned about the condition of our County's library system. The Department of Libraries has sustained several years of drastic cuts, and this year – down 9.7% – is no different. I continue to believe that libraries are citadels of our civic life, and they are a priority of mine as I contemplate the FY12 budget. I am pleased that the Health and Human Services Committee, which oversees the Libraries budget, placed several funding increments on the Council's reconciliation list when they considered the budget for libraries on April 13. I am particularly concerned about the County Executive's recommendation to classify four libraries, including Silver Spring, as "neighborhood libraries" where patrons will experience a significant decrease in service. I am pleased that the HHS Committee placed money on the reconciliation list to address this recommendation as well.

Again, I thank you for taking the time to write, and I thank you for your service on the Citizens Advisory Board. I look forward to continuing our work together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Berliner".

Roger Berliner
Council Vice-President
District 1